Rome in 1911, the following points may be attended to:—(1) The working session should be limited to one week; (2) only papers of serious scientific value should be accepted; (3) summaries of all such papers should be distributed (in the four authorised languages) on the opening day.

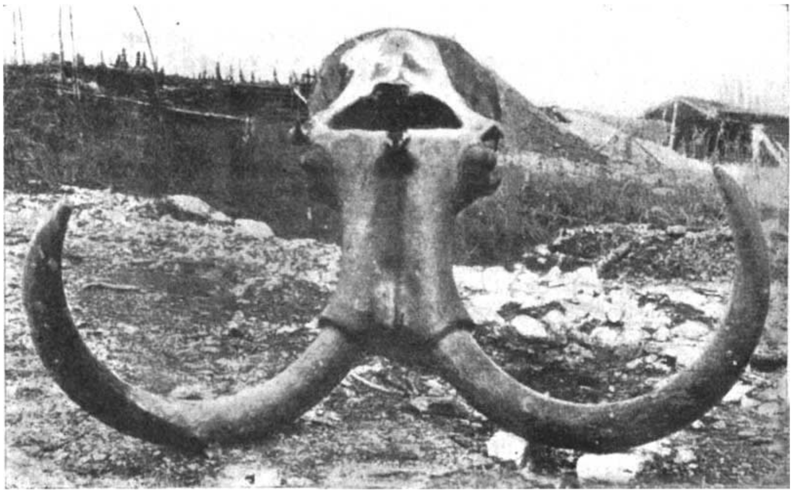
On the social side the delegates have every reason to thank the Federal and Cantonal authorities, the organising committee, and the Swiss members of the congress for their charming hospitality.

As to the outcome of the congress, the principal concrete result is the step taken towards the standardisation of the 1 : 1,000,000 map. But in all such meetings the obvious results are by no means the only ones to consider. It is no small gain that men of many nationalities, interested in a particular group of studies, should meet together to exchange ideas and experiences. One cannot doubt that such meetings have a value in broadening human knowledge and sympathies which is not to be measured in any simple quantitative way. As the president of the Swiss Confederation said, in words which it would be difficult to improve, "Votre Congrès contribuera au rapprochement des nations et à la fraternité entre les peuples, car rien n'est plus propre à dissiper les divergences de vues et à élever le regard au-dessus des bornes-frontières de chaque pays que la connaissance des lois universelles qui régissent le monde et unissent d'un lien naturel la grande famille humaine."

C. F. CLOSE.

MAMMOTH-HUNTING IN ALASKA.

SINCE Kotzebue's discovery of fossil remains of mammoth and musk-ox in 1815, Alaska has been famed as a store-house for Pleistocene mammals; and in 1904 the Smithsonian Institution dispatched an expedition to obtain specimens for the museum at Washington. This expedition also visited Yukon territory, where it was successful in obtaining the magnificent mammoth skull shown in the accompanying illustration. Last year a second fossil-hunting expedition was dispatched by the same body, in charge of Mr. C. W. Gilmore, the results of which are recorded in vol. li. of Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections. Mammoth-tusks of very large size were seen and measured, although it does not appear that the finest were transported to Washington. Incidentally, it is mentioned that the largest known skeleton of the mammoth is in the museum of the Chicago Academy, and is stated to be 13 feet in height. If this be true, reconsideration of the opinion that the mammoth was an animal of the approximate size of the Indian elephant is apparently demanded. Reports have been current to the effect that remains of the American mastodon occur in the Alaskan mud in company with those of mammoth. This, however, is an error, such remains being found in this region only in the "placer" deposits of the Yukon, which are doubtless of somewhat earlier age. The other remains discovered by the expedition include those of bison, elk, horse, beaver, and bear. The bison-skulls, some of which retain the sheaths of the horns, are referred to two distinct species, and indicate animals with an enormous horn-spread, altogether unparalleled by their modern representative. Alaskan mammoth-ivory is stated to be, on the average, inferior in quality to that from Siberia.



Skull and tusks of *Elephas primigenius* found 42 feet below the surface, in the muck, on Quartz Creek, near Dawson, Yukon Territory, Canada.

ALPHONSE PÉRON.

IT is with deep regret that we record the death of Alphonse Péron, eminent geologist and soldier, who passed away at Auxerre on July 2, after a lingering illness.

Pierre Alphonse Péron was born at Saint Fargeau on November 29, 1834, and studied at the college of Auxerre, where his lively interest in natural history soon became manifest. At the age of nineteen he entered Saint Cyr, whence he passed into the infantry in January, 1855. He served in various districts in France and in Corsica, was engaged in Algeria in the suppression of the rebellion of 1864, obtained his captaincy in 1867, and in the Franco-Prussian war served with the army of the Rhine. At Sedan he was severely wounded and left for dead upon the field. He retired from the army in 1896, having received the honour of Commandeur de la Légion d'Honneur in 1890.

Notwithstanding the exacting nature of his military duties, Péron neglected no opportunity for the indulgence of his taste for geology. Wherever he went he never failed to note the geological characters of the district, and, when possible, to make a collection of fossils. His observations in the field provided a considerable number of memoirs and notes which have appeared in the Memoirs and Bulletins of the Geological Society of France, of which society he was elected president in 1905; in the *Comptes rendus* de l'Académie des Sciences, in the *Comptes rendus* de l'Association française pour l'Avancement des Sciences, and other serials. The Société des Sciences historiques et naturelles de l'Yonne, in which he took great interest and ably supported his friend Cotteau, owes much of its success to his energy; in the Bulletin of this society are to be found some important papers from his pen. Among Péron's principal contributions to geological science since the appearance of his first work, "Notice sur la Géologie du Canton de Saint Fargeau," published in 1865,

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may be mentioned "Notes pour Servir à l'Histoire du Terrain de Craie dans le S.E. du Bassin Anglo-Parisien." To his sojourn in northern Africa we owe the numerous works on the geology of that region, and one of them, the "Essai d'une Description géologique de l'Algérie," was awarded the Grand Prix des Sciences physiques. A most important work on "Les Ammonites du Crétacé supérieur de l'Algérie," was published in the Memoirs of the Geological Society of France in 1896–7. He also made a special study of the stratigraphy of the Cretaceous rocks of France and Belgium.

Péron was a correspondant of the Academy of Sciences. In him geology loses one of its most conscientious and disinterested students, one who, while honours were showered upon him, found his greatest delight in assisting his younger *confrères* in the elucidation of some difficult problem in stratigraphy.

NOTES.

A ROYAL Commission has been appointed by the King to make an inventory of the ancient and historical monuments and constructions connected with or illustrative of the contemporary culture, civilisation, and conditions of life of the people in Wales from the earliest times, and to specify those which seem most worthy of preservation. The commissioners are:—Sir John Rhys, University of Oxford; Prof. E. Anwyl, University College of Wales, Aberystwyth; Prof. R. C. Bosanquet, University of Liverpool; Mr. E. Vincent Evans; Alderman Robert Hughes, J.P.; Rev. Griffith Hartwell Jones; and Lieut.-Colonel W. Llewelyn Morgan, R.E. The secretary is Mr. Edward Owen, of the India Office, S.W., and the assistant secretary Mr. P. E. Thomas. We warmly congratulate Wales. We presume there are no ancient monuments in the other parts of Britain.

WE regret to learn that Prof. Kamerlingh Onnes's account of his researches on the liquefaction of helium is delayed by illness brought on by overwork. We hope, however, to be able to print an authoritative description of the investigations shortly.

WE learn from *Science* that by a recent decree of the Government of Peru, issued by President Pardo, the time of the seventy-fifth meridian west of Greenwich was on July 28 adopted as the national standard time for the whole of Peru. The meridian is only a few minutes from that of Lima, and runs almost exactly through the middle of the country. All timepieces throughout Peru will now coincide with those in the United States where eastern time is kept. Peru is the first South American republic to adopt the world standard.

IT is proposed to publish reproductions of the collection of 338 portraits of living physicists presented recently in an album to Prof. von Lang, Vienna, in celebration of his jubilee, if a sufficient number of subscribers can be found. Intending subscribers should communicate with Prof. Anton Lampa, Vienna, IX. Türkenstrasse 3. Applications after the publication of the reproductions cannot be considered, as only so many copies will be made as are subscribed for.

WE notice with regret that the committee of the Denmark Greenland Expedition has received a telegram announcing that Dr. Mylius Erichsen, the leader of the expedition, and two companions, a Dane and an Eskimo, have perished in a snowstorm while travelling inland. The general work of the expedition has, however, been successfully accomplished, and the whole north-eastern coast of Greenland has been charted. A Reuter message states also that Dr. Erichsen and his two companions who perished with him were driven on to an ice-floe during a snowstorm, and that they drifted away from land. Their provisions being exhausted, the explorers became so weak that they were unable to return to the station. The Eskimo who brought the news arrived in a dying condition, and died immediately after making his report. The expedition left Copenhagen on June 24, 1906, and its main object was to map the little-known parts of north-east Greenland and collect material for the study of ethnological, biological, and seismological questions in those regions.

THE next meeting of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, which will be held at Brisbane in January, 1909, provides an opportunity for the younger generation of scientific workers to bring the results of original work before an influential and interested audience in the Antipodes. At the meeting there will be gathered together most of the leading representatives of scientific and engineering societies of Australasia, and also men holding high administrative or consultative positions under the various governments. Papers from British contributors will be sure to receive marked attention, and the authors' names will be introduced to important people in a portion of the globe where competition for vacant posts is less keen than it is in Europe or the United States. Mr. K. Swanwick, honorary secretary of Section A (Astronomy, Mathematics, and Physics) of the association, asks us to say that original papers from the British Isles will be heartily welcomed in his section; for, in the absence of the large and well-equipped laboratories of the older countries, it is unlikely that such papers by local workers will be numerous. Communications should be sent to Mr. Swanwick at Celtic Chambers, George Street, Brisbane, as early as possible, and the final date for receiving papers is December 26, 1908.

ON Saturday, August 8, Mr. W. Wright made a remarkable flight with his aëroplane at the Hunandières racecourse, Le Mans, in the presence of leading members of the Aéro Club of France. The aëroplane rose easily to a height of 30 feet or 40 feet, and travelled over a course of about 2500 feet in one minute forty-five seconds, returning within 50 feet from the point of departure under the complete control of the aëronaut. On Monday, August 10, Mr. Wright made his machine describe a figure of eight twice in the air, and then returned to the starting point without any difficulty. In another flight, on Tuesday, he described three wide circles at various altitudes. The flight lasted three minutes forty-three seconds, and the aëroplane travelled at a speed of 65 kilometres an hour.

FURTHER particulars of the voyage of Count Zeppelin's airship on August 4, and its subsequent unfortunate destruction, can now be added to the information available when we went to press last week. It appears that the voyage from Friedrichshafen, which was left at 6.45 a.m., to Mannheim—a distance of about 360 kilometres—was accomplished in eight hours. When Count Zeppelin landed near Oppenheim about 6 p.m., the airship had been eleven hours continuously in the air, but the average speed for the whole voyage was reduced, owing to a defective motor, to 36 kilometres an hour. The return voyage from Mainz to Echterdingen, where Count Zeppelin landed on the morning of August 5—to await fresh supplies of hydrogen rendered necessary by leakages in the balloon—took eight hours, though the distance was

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